SOME NEW BOOKS

John Stuart Mill and Henry Thomas Buckle

The third volume of the work entitled *The English Utilitarians* by LESLIE STEPHEN (Putnams) is devoted mainly to John Stuart Mill, who succeeded his father, James Mill, as leader of the Benthamite sect, and who in the latter years of his life exercised a far wider authority than had ever been attained by his predecessor. The disciples of Bentham and James Mill had been relatively few, but the hour came when John Stuart Mill was the most conspicuous of English thinkers, when political Liberals referred to him as the soundest expounder of their principles, and when even in the English universities he probably had more followers than any other teacher. The causes of the intellectual change which such facts indicate are examined in the book before us, which begins, however, with an account of J. S. Mill's personal history, based to a large extent on his autobiography.

I.

John Stuart Mill, born on the 20th of May, 1806, was 26 years old at the death of Bentham and 30 at the death of his father. He was thus old enough to be deeply affected by their personal influence, but his precocity made his relation to his elders far more intimate than it otherwise would have been. From his early years he was looked upon by James Mill and Bentham as their spiritual heir. No child was ever more strenuously indoctrinated with the views of a sect. From the dawn of his intellect until the age of 14 he was the subject of one of the most singular educational experiments recorded. He says in his autobiography that his memory did not go back to the time when he began Greek, but he had been told that he was then 3 years old. By his eighth year he had read all Herodotus, Xenophon's "Cyropædia" and "Memorabilia," part of Lucian and six dialogues of Plato, including the "Theætetus." In the next three years he read Homer, Thucydides, parts of the plays of Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes, Demosthenes, Aeschines and Lysias, Theocritus, Anacreon and the Anthology, and, finally, Aristotle's "Rhetoric," which treatise he carefully analyzed and tabulated at the age of 11. He did not begin Latin till his eighth year, when he read Cornelius Nepos and Cæsar's "Commentaries." By his twelfth year he had read much of Virgil, Horace, Livy, Sallust, Ovid's "Metamorphoses," Terence, Lucretius and a great deal of Cicero.

As regards mathematics we may mention that by his eighth year he had learned a little arithmetic, had afterward gone on to conic sections and trigonometry, and had begun the differential calculus. He read also some books upon the experimental sciences, especially chemistry, but had no opportunity of seeing actual experiments. In English, before he was 12, he had read histories, making notes and discussing the results with his father in morning walks. In a purely imaginative direction he had been allowed to read "Robinson Crusoe," "The Arabian Nights," "Don Quixote," Miss Edgeworth's stories, Brooke's "Fool of Quality," Joanna Baillie's plays and Pope's Homer. He was attracted by Scott's lays and some of Campbell's lyrics, but cared little for Shakespeare, and could make nothing of Spenser's "Faery Queen." He attempted but little Latin, and no Greek composition; he wrote a few childish "histories," and a little English verse. Such had been his intellectual training up to the age of 12.

During the following years he was initiated in philosophical studies. Logic he began by reading Aristotle, some of the scholastic treatises and Hobbes's "*Computatio sive Logica*." His father lectured him upon the utility of the syllogism. He continued to read classical literature, but was now expected to understand the thought as well as the words. He made a careful study of Demosthenes, Tacitus, Juvenal and Quintilian, and then advanced to Plato. He thought that he owed an especial debt to Plato, though he cared little for the more mystical or poetical doctrines congenial to the so-called Platonists. His faculties were further stimulated by helping his father in the proofs of the "History of India." In the year 1819, being then 13, he went through a complete course of political economy, first reducing to writing his father's oral expositions, and then carefully reading Ricardo and Adam Smith.

Here ended John Stuart Mill's lessons, so far as they were received systematically from his father. In his own opinion the experiment proved the possibility of instilling into a child an amount of knowledge such as is rarely acquired before manhood. Not only was he widely read, but he was interested in a large circle of subjects. Yet he himself expresses the opinion that he was rather below than above par in quickness of apprehension, retentiveness of memory and energy of character. The inference drawn by him was that what he did could be done by any child of average health and capacity. His later achievements, he thinks, were due to the fact that, among other favorable circumstances, his father's training had given him the start of his contemporaries by a "quarter of a century." John Stuart Mill is sometimes adduced as an example of the evils done by excessive instruction, but Mr. Stephen, while inclined to think that a little cricket would have been an excellent substitute for half the ancient literature hammered into the lad, points out that, after all, he became one of the leading men of his generation, and if his strenuous education was not the sole cause, it must be reckoned as having been a main condition of his success. Clearly his father's teaching had one, and that the highest, merit. The son had been taught really to use his mind; he had been trained to argue closely; to test conclusions, instead of receiving them passively, and to systematize his knowledge as he acquired it. The course of arduous mental gymnastics to which he had been subjected qualified him to appear in early youth as a vigorous controversialist; and to achieve an immense quantity of valuable work before he passed middle age. Our author is disposed to think it improbable that more could have been made of John Stuart Mill's faculties by any other system; certainly he gave a rarely approached instance of a life in which the waste of energy is reduced to a minimum.

II.

At the end of his fourteenth year Mill went to the South of France, and stayed there for a twelvemonth with Sir Samuel Bentham, the brother of Jeremy. There he learned French, attended various courses of lectures, and carried further the study of mathematics and of political economy. The period, however, was chiefly notable for the awakening of other tastes. The lessons of fencing and riding masters seem to have been thrown away, but he learned something of botany from George Bentham, the son of Sir Samuel, afterward distinguished in the science. Mill's taste for botanising provided him with almost his only recreation. It encouraged the love of walking, and during a tour in the Pyrenees, he learned to enjoy natural scenery. He also appears to have lost in French society some of the awkwardness due to his boyhood's isolation. According to himself, the greatest advantage which he derived from his sojourn in France was his "having breathed for a whole year the free and genial atmosphere of Continental life." He could not then, as he remarks in his autobiography, have known much of English society. He did not know, he says, its "low moral tone," the "absence of high feelings" and "sneering depreciation of all demonstrations of them," and he could not, consequently, perceive the contrast with the French, who cultivate sentiments elevated, by comparison at least, and who, by the habitual exercise of the feelings, encourage also a culture of the understanding that descends to the less educated classes. Still he was impressed by French amiability and sociability, contrasted with the English habit of "acting as if everybody else was either an enemy or a bore." Mill's appreciation of French courtesy fell in with a marked tendency of his thought. Of course, at the age of 14 he had only laid the foundation of an acquaintance with France and Frenchmen which was to become closer in subsequent years. He ultimately acquired a cordial sympathy with the French Liberals, grew to be throughly familiar with French politics, and followed the later history of his friends with interest and admiration. In his early essays he constantly insists upon the merits of French writers, and laments the scandalous ignorance of their achievments prevalent in England. The French *philosophes* of the eighteenth century became his model. He himself thinks that he pushed his zeal in this direction even to excess, and there is no doubt that some contemporary French writers exercised an influence of the highest importance upon his views. German he did not learn until some time later, nor did he ever become a profound student of German literature and philosophy. France, on the other hand, was a kind of second country to him, and excited what may almost be called a patriotic sentiment. The fact contributed for many years to make him somewhat of an alien in his native land.

John Stuart Mill returned to England in July, 1821. There he took up his old studies, read Condillac, and a history of the French Revolution, about which, in spite of his previous stay in France, he had known very little. Being intended for the bar, he now began to study Roman law under John Austin. He set to work upon Bentham, and the reading of Dumont's *Traités de Législation* formed an epoch in his life. His botanical studies had fostered Mill's early taste for classification, already awakened by his previous logical studies. He was now delighted to find that human actions might be classified as well as plants, and, moreover, classified on the principle of utility, that is to say, by reference to a guiding rule for all known conduct. "Utility" took its place as "the keystone which held together the detached and fragmentary parts of his knowledge and beliefs." He had now a philosophy, and even, he says, "in one of the best senses of the word, a religion, the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of a life." His religion was strictly scientific; it did not regard as possible an abrupt regeneration of man; it recognized the necessity of slow elaboration, but offered a sufficiently wide vista of continuous improvement to be promoted by unremitting labor. At this time the boy enlarged his philosophical reading; studied Locke, Helvetius and Hartley, Berkeley and Hume's "Essays," besides Reid, Dugald Stewart and Brown's essay upon "Cause and Effect." These studies were carried on while he was reading his father's "Analysis of the Human Mind" in manuscript, and no doubt discussing with his father the points raised by the arguments. The last book which he mentions in his autobiography as affecting his early development is "Philip Beauchamp's" treatise upon the utility of religion, the treatise in which Bentham's views upon the subject were set forth by Grote.

In 1822, being then 16, Mill began to compose "argumentative" essays, and was already beginning to take a position in the Utilitarian circle. John Austin was his tutor, as we have said, in Roman Law. With him and with Grote he held much "sympathetic communion," but his first ally among men whom he could feel to be contemporaries, was Austin's younger brother, Charles. He was, says Mill, the "really influential mind among those intellectual gladiators," the young Cambridge orators. John Mill visited Charles Austin at Cambridge in 1822, and greatly impressed the undergraduates by his conversational power. The elder Mill was urged to send his son to Trinity College, Cambridge, but, apparently, he feared to expose the youth to Anglican contagion. John Mill himself long held the English universities to be mere institutions for supporting the established creed. "We regard the system of these institutions," he said in 1866, "as administered for two centuries past, with sentiments little short of utter abhorrence." Meanwhile, he formed in the winter of 1822-23 a little society of his own, which he called the Utilitarian Society. He mentions among its members William Eyton Tooke, son of Thomas Tooke, the economist; William Ellis, known for his exertions in the direction of promoting the study of political economy in schools; George John Graham, afterward an official in the Bankruptcy Court, and Graham's special friend, John Arthur Roebuck, who was to be one of the most thorough-going Radicals of the following period, though in the end he became a Tory. With these youths all apparently John Mill's seniors by a few years, he discussed the principles of the sect, and became, as he says, "a sort of leader."

III.

When he had just finished his seventeenth year, John Stuart Mill received the appointment which decided the future course of his outward life. On May 21, 1823, he was appointed to a clerkship in the India House, and received successive promotions, till in 1856 he became chief of the office with a salary of £2,000 a year. The advantage of the position to a man of Mill's power of work was unmistakable. He was placed beyond all anxiety as to breadwinning. He was not bound to make a living by his pen, and could devote himself to writing of permanent value. He was at the same time brought into close relation with the conduct of actual affairs; forced to recognize the necessity of compromise, and to study the art of instilling thoughts into minds not specially prepared for their reception. It is pointed out by Mr. Stephen that Mill's books show how well he acquired this art. Whatever their other merits or defects, they unquestionably reconcile conditions that too often conflict; they are the product of mature reflection, and yet they are so presented as to be intelligible without special initiation. As an interpreter between the abstract philosopher and the man of common sense, Mill is unsurpassable.

Mill's duties at the India House were not such as to absorb his powers, and though conscientiously discharging his official functions he managed to turn out as much other work as might have occupied the whole time of an average man. His first printed writings had been some letters in the *Traveller* in 1822, defending Ricardo and James Mill against some criticism by Torrens. He then contributed three letters to the *Morning Chronicle* denouncing the prosecution of Richard Carlile for publishing the works of Tom Paine, a prosecution which excited the rightful wrath of the Utilitarians. From the time when the *Westminster Review* was started in the spring of 1824, he was the most frequent writer for it, contributing thirteen articles between the second and the eighteenth number. Mr. Stephen, who has read these articles, finds that Mill had not as yet attained his full powers of expression; neither the style nor the arrangement of the matter had the merits of his later works. By far the most remarkable among them was the review of Whately's "Logic" in January, 1828; here the knowledge displayed and the vigor of the diction are pronounced surprising in a youth of 21. The article proves, moreover, that Mill was already reflecting upon the questions to be treated in his own "Logic." While thus serving an apprenticeship to journalism, Mill was going through a notable mental training. About the beginning of 1825 he undertook to edit Bentham's "Rationale of Evidence." He says that this work "occupied nearly all his leisure for about a year," and Mr. Stephen regards as marvellous the accomplishment of such a task by a youth of 20 in a twelvemonth. He had to condense large masses of Bentham's crabbed manuscript into a continuous treatise; to "unroll" his author's involved and parenthetic sentences; to read the standard English textbooks upon evidence; to reply to reviewers of previous works of Bentham's, and to add comments upon some logical points. Finally, he had to see "five large volumes through the press." Our author, like Mill himself, attributes to the practice thus obtained the fact that the editor's style became afterward "markedly superior" to what it had been before.

The extraordinary amount of labor which Mill underwent in 1825 is connected by Mr. Stephen with the singular mental convulsion which he experienced in the next year. He was, as he himself says, in a "dull state of nerves" during the autumn of 1826. It occurred to him to ask whether he would be happy, supposing all his objects in life could be realized. "An irrepressible consciousness distinctly answered, No." He could think of no physician of the mind who could "raze out the rooted trouble of the brain." He dragged on mechanically through the winter of 1826-27, and the gloom only gathered. He made up his mind that he could not bear life for more than a year. Gradually, however, he recovered, though he suffered several relapses. He learned, he says, two lessons: first, that, though happiness must be the end, it must not be the immediate, or conscious, end of life. Ask whether you are happy and you will cease to be happy. Fix upon some end external to happiness, and happiness will be "inhaled with the air you breathe." In the second place, he learned to make the "cultivation of the feelings" one of the cardinal points in his ethical and philosophical creed. It was characteristic of Mill that he did not explicitly attribute this mental crisis to the obvious physical cause, excessive mental exertion. He would never admit that hard work could injure anybody. He intimated that his dejection was occasioned by a "low state of nerves," but added that this was one of the accidents to which anyone is occasionally liable. Mr. Stephen suggests that, at any rate, a man would be *more* liable to it, who, like Mill, had been kept in a state of severe intellectual tension from his earliest infancy, and who had gone through such labors as were involved in the editing of Bentham's "Rationale of Evidence." That his health was permanently affected there seems to be no doubt. Ten years later (1836) he was "seized with an obstinate derangement of the brain." One symptom was a "ceaseless spasmodic twitching over one eye," which never left him. In 1839 another illness forced him to take a month's holiday, which he spent in Italy. It left an abiding weakness of the lungs and the stomach. An accident in 1848 led to a long illness and the prostration of the nervous system. In 1854 another serious illness, which caused him to undertake an eight months' tour in Italy, Sicily and Greece, led to the "partial destruction of one lung," and "great general debility." In spite of these sufferings Mill continued to work as strenuously as before, and, until the illness of 1848, showed no signs of any decline of intellectual energy.

Meanwhile his energetic course of self-education was scarcely interrupted by the period of dejection. In 1825 he contributed an article upon Catholic emancipation to a "Parliamentary History." He wrote articles upon the commercial crisis, and upon the currency, and upon reciprocity in commerce for the two subsequent annual issues of the same work. At the same time he learned German, forming a class for the purpose. He started a society which met two days a week at Grote's house; here the young men discussed in succession political economy, logic and psychology. A little later, the Utilitarians, headed by Charles Austin, founded a debating society on the model of the "Speculative Society" of Edinburgh. Besides the Utilitarians, this society included Macaulay, Thirlwall, Praed, the Bulwers, Fonblanque, Charles Buller, Cockburn, Shee and Abraham Hayward. Maurice and Sterling were representatives of a Liberalism widely differing from Utilitarianism. Until 1829, Mill took part in nearly every debate. He learned to speak fluently, if not gracefully, and improved his style by preparing written speeches. New thoughts were now being suggested to Mill from various quarters. Macaulay's attack upon his father's political theories led him to recognize the inadequacy of the Utilitarian system, and forced him to consider the logical problems involved. He came under the influence of the Saint Simonians about the same time. He was greatly impressed by the Saint Simonian doctrine of the alternation of "critical" and "constructive" periods. He admitted the necessity of something better than the negative or "critical philosophy" of the eighteenth century. He desired the formation of a spiritual power. He protested, however, against the excessive spirit of system, and against premature attempts to organize such a power. By degrees, however, he modified his objections, and by the end of November, 1831, declared his belief that the Saint Simonian ideal would be the final state of the human race. While his mind was thus fermenting with many new ideas, new at least to him, he was profoundly moved by the French Revolution of July, 1830. He went at once to Paris with Roebuck and Graham, was introduced to Lafayette, made friends with other popular leaders, and came back prepared to take an active part in behalf of the reform agitation. For some years he was an active journalist, contributing to the *Examiner* under Fonblanque. A series of articles, called "The Spirit of the Age," in this paper led to his acquaintance with Carlyle, who took him to be a "new Mystic." In 1830 and 1831 he wrote his essays on "Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy," and in the next year the articles upon foundations and upon the "Currency Juggle," which are the first of his collected dissertations.

IV.

Mill's mental history has now been traced up to the age of twenty-six, when the follower had become fully competent to become the guide. His own experience had brought home to him the sense of a certain narrowness and rigidity in the Utilitarians; his friendly controversies had led him to regard opponents with more toleration than Benthamites generally displayed, and he was sincerely anxious to widen the bases of his creed, and to assimilate whatever was valuable in conflicting doctrines. Moreover, his practice as a writer had by this time enabled him to express himself with great clearness and energy, and young as he still was, he was better qualified than any of his contemporaries to expound the views of his party.

The period which followed the Reform bill made a great change in Mill's personal position. The Utilitarians had taken their part in the agitation, and expected to share in the fruits of victory. Grote and Roebuck now entered the House for the first time. Charles Buller and Sir William Molesworth were also new members, and both were among the youngest recruits of the Utilitarian party. These and a few more formed the group known as the "philosophical Radicals." Mill became their chief representative in the press. The philosophical Radicals, however, were doomed to failure. The Reform bill had transferred power to the middle classes, who had forced the doors for themselves, but had no desire to admit the crowd still left outside. The result was that the philosophical Radicals found themselves, to their great surprise, without any great body of voters behind them, and were only able to complain of the half-hearted policy of the Whigs and to weaken the Whig administration, until the Conservatives under Peel could take advantage of the situation. Eventually, philosophical Radicalism died out. Its adherents became Whigs, or joined the Cobden school of Radicalism, which was the very antithesis of Socialism. The free trade movement, which was gathering strength as the manufacturing industries grew stronger, had, no doubt, an affinity for one important part of the Benthamite teaching. But such men as Cobden and Bright, though they accepted the political economy of the Utilitarians, could not be counted as products or adherents of the Utilitarian philosophy.

Mill's first personal acquaintance with Carlyle began in 1831, when Carlyle came to London and desired to see the author of the articles upon the "Spirit of the Age." For a time there was a warm liking upon both sides. Mill appeared as a candid and eager disciple, and Carlyle hoped that he would become a "mystic." During Carlyle's subsequent retirement at Craigenputtock, they carried on an intimate correspondence. Mill's letters, of which Froude gives a summary, exhibit Mill's characteristic candor and desire to profit by a new light. Though he speaks with the deference becoming to a younger man, and to one who admits his senior's superiority as a poet, if not as a mere logician, he confesses with a certain shyness to radical dissent upon vital points. The most remarkable characteristic is Mill's conviction that he has emerged from the old dry Benthamism into some higher creed. What precisely that higher creed may be is not so obvious. When in 1834 Carlyle finally settled in London, the intercourse became frequent. Mill supplied Carlyle with books on the French Revolution, and, as is well known, was responsible for the destruction of the manuscript of the first volume. His subsequent review of the work in the *Westminster* may have been prompted partly by remorse for this catastrophe, though mainly no doubt by a generous desire to help his friend.

Carlyle, as the old tutor of Charles Buller, was naturally acquainted with the Utilitarian circle. The divergence, however, of his whole creed and ways of thought from theirs was certain in the end to cool personal relations. Carlyle expresses respect for the honesty of the Utilitarians, and considers them as allies in the war against cant. But his "mysticism" implied the conviction that their negative attitude in regard to religion was altogether detestable; while in political theories he was at the very opposite pole. Mill sympathized with "Chartism" (1839) and with "Past and Present" (1843), as remonstrances against the sins of the governing classes; but altogether rejected what he took to be the reactionary tendency of the Carlylese gospel. Ultimately, in 1849, when Carlyle attacked the anti-slavery agitators, Mill made an indignant reply, and all intercourse ceased. Mill's judgment of Carlyle, given in the "Autobiography," shows the vital difference between the men. Carlyle, he says, was a poet and a man of intuition; Mill himself was neither. Carlyle saw at once many things which Mill could only "hobble after and prove," when they were pointed out. "I knew that I could not see round him, and could never be certain that I saw over him, and I never presumed to judge him with any definiteness, until he was interpreted to me by one greatly superior to us both, who was more a poet than he, and more a thinker than I, whose own mind and nature included his, and infinitely more;" that is to say, by Mrs. Taylor, who played so large a part in Mill's life and to whom we shall presently recur. Carlyle's aversion to scepticism of a certain kind, to Utilitarianism, to logic and to political economy was too inveterate to allow of any real alliance with Mill.

As philosophical Radicalism sank into impotence, Mill's occupation as its advocate was gone. For many years he withdrew altogether from London society. This retirement was obviously due in part to his intimate association with Mrs. Taylor. The "most valuable friendship of his life," as he terms it, had been formed in 1830. Mrs. Taylor was two years his junior. Her husband was a man in business, a drysalter, or wholesale druggist, a "most upright, brave and honorable man," according to Mill, and he was regarded by her with the "strongest affection" through life. Taylor was, however, without the tastes which would have qualified him to be a meet intellectual companion for his wife. In this respect Mill was greatly his superior, and his intimacy with Mrs. Taylor rapidly developed. She was an invalid for many years, and had to live in country lodgings apart from her husband. Mill dined with her twice a week, her husband dining elsewhere. He travelled with her on the Continent during his illness of 1836. Although Taylor himself behaved with singular generosity, and Mill himself states that his own relation to Mrs. Taylor was one of "strong affection and confidential intimacy only," the connection naturally provoked censure. His father bluntly condemned him for being in love with another man's wife. His mother and sisters disapproved, and were finally estranged by his marriage in later years. Mrs. Grote gave him up, apparently on this ground, although he continued his intercourse with the historian. Roebuck says that a remonstrance, which he imprudently made to Mill, led to the cessation of their friendship. Mill, who worshipped Mrs. Taylor as an embodiment of all that was excellent in human nature, resented such disapproval bitterly; any reference to Mrs. Taylor produced excitement, and he avoided collisions with possible censors by retiring from the world altogether. We may here note that Mr. Taylor died in July, 1849; in April, 1851, his widow became Mill's wife. They coöperated in the remarkable essay upon "Liberty," which, from a purely literary point of view, is the best of Mill's writings. He tells us that every sentence in it, after being twice written, was carefully weighed and criticised by his wife and himself. They had intended to make a final revision of it during the winter of 1858-59, but Mrs. Mill died at Avignon from a sudden attack of congestion of the lungs. The blow was crushing. Mill felt that "the spring of his life was broken." He withdrew for a time into complete isolation, though he soon found some solace in work. He bought a house at Avignon, and spent half his time there, to be near his wife's grave. His stepdaughter, Miss Taylor, lived with him, and he expresses his gratitude for having drawn two such prizes in "the lottery of life."

V.

It was while Mill led the life of a recluse that he produced his most elaborate and important works. His "Logic" was published in the spring of 1843. The book was the product of strenuous, long-continued thought, and of influences from various quarters. The success exceeded his anticipation. No one since Locke had approached John Stuart Mill in the power of making the problems of philosophy interesting to the laity. Mill's "Political Economy" was begun in the autumn of 1845, and finished by the end of 1847. This treatise became popular in a sense in which no work upon the same topic had been popular since the "Wealth of Nations;" it owed its success in a great degree to the constant endeavor to trace the bearings of merely abstract formulæ upon the general questions of social progress. He stimulated the rising interest in those important problems, and, even if his solutions did not carry general conviction, they brought to him in later years a following of reverent disciples. The "Political Economy" represents essentially a development of the Ricardian doctrine. In the first edition of the work the author spoke decidedly against the practicability of Socialism. The events of 1848, however, seemed to him to open new possibilities for the propagation of novel doctrines. In the interval Mill seems to have become less of a Democrat, because more convinced of the incapacity of the masses; but more of a Socialist in the sense that he looked forward to a complete though distant revolution in the whole structure of society. He, accordingly, modified the part of his book in which Socialism was discussed, and a second edition (1849) represented a more advanced opinion.

Mr. Stephen examines at some length the question how far Mill could be called a Socialist. The point of difference was that Mill believed in competition to the last, and was, so far, a thorough "individualist." On the other hand, he held that the forcible acquisition of land by its first owners was still a taint on the existing title. He drew the deduction that land ought to be nationalized; that the State ought to become the national landlord, as in India, and that at any rate, nothing should be done by which more land could get into private hands. If, then, the forcible acquisition of land by its first owners still casts a cloud upon the title, is property in other wealth altogether just? Mill does not answer this question fairly. He says in one place that "movable property" has, on the whole, a purer "origin than landed property." It represents industry, not simply force. On the other hand, Mill intimates that in the acquisition of even movable property, there has been a good deal of fraud, and that there have been many practices at which "a person of delicate conscience" might scruple. If Mill was far from the doctrine of Karl Marx, and did not hold that capital is a mere name for the outcome of a process of exploitation, he admitted at least that there was no such thing as justice in the actual industrial order. Wealth, he thought, represents something very different from a reward given in proportion to industry. In the first place, it is inherited, and Mill proposed, therefore, to limit inheritances. Again, the poor man certainly does not start on equal terms with his richer rival. He that hath not may not lose that which he hath, but he has small chances of climbing the ladder. Mill denied that the poverty of the masses is due to a "law of nature;" and imputed it, partly at least, to the combination of capitalists, which enables them to bring their power to bear in keeping down the rate of wages to an indefinite extent. It is pretty clear that, if Mill's views were actually adopted; if the State educated, nationalized the land, supported the poor, restrained marriage, regulated labor where individual competition failed, and used its power to equalize wealth, it would very soon adopt State Socialism and lose sight of the reservation which made Mill himself an individualist after all.

A word should be said about Mill's relations with Auguste Comte. Their correspondence began in 1841, when Mill's "Logic" was passing through the final stage of composition. It seems that, on taking up, in 1837, the two first volumes of Comte's "Philosophie Positive," Mill had been deeply impressed; he read their successors, and in November, 1841, he wrote to Comte as an unknown admirer, and, indeed, in the tone of an ardent disciple. He accepts Comte's main position, he said, though on some secondary questions he has doubts which may disappear. Mill holds that a constructive should succeed to a critical philosophy and sees the realization of his hopes in the new doctrine. He thinks with Comte that a "spiritual power" should be constituted, which cannot be reached through simple liberty of discussion; and believes in a religion of humanity destined to replace theology. Comte took Mill for a thorough convert. A discord, however, soon showed itself. In 1843 Mill began an argument as to the equality of the sexes which lasted for some months. Comte eventually said that further argument would be useless, as Mill was not yet prepared to accept "fundamental truths." Mill agreed to drop the discussion, and added that his own opinions had only been confirmed. In other words, the supposed convert announced himself as an independent though respectful junior colleague with a right to differ. The misunderstanding had further consequences. When, in June 1843, Comte was expecting to be dismissed from his post, Mill declared that, so long as he lived, he would share his last sou with his friend. Comte declined to take money from a fellow thinker, but afterward, in July 1844, when he actually lost his post, accepted help from Mill's richer friends, Grote, Molesworth and Raikes Currie. Comte took their gift to be a tribute from disciples, and was offended when, after the first year, they declined to continue the subsidy. Mill, who had been the mediator, acted with all possible frankness and delicacy, but had to point out that he and his friends were partial allies, not subjects. Gradually the discord developed, and the correspondence dropped. Mill ultimately came to think that Comte's doctrine of a spiritual power implied a despotism of the worst kind. In his final criticism of the founder of Positivism, he expressed disapproval, and in the later editions of the "Logic," modified some of his early compliments.

The two books, the "Logic" and the "Political Economy," present a nearly complete statement of Mill's leading views. Although in later years he was to treat of political, ethical and philosophical topics, his principal doctrines were now sufficiently expounded, and the later writings were rather deductions or applications than a breaking of new ground. None of them involved so strenuous and long continued a process of mental elaboration. The success of these two books gave him a position at the time unrivalled. He was accepted as the Liberal philosopher; and could speak as one of unquestioned authority. Here we should note that, on the extinction of the East India Company in 1857, he drafted a petition to Parliament on their behalf. As his father had been in 1833, so he became the apologist of a system generally condemned by the Liberals of the day. His belief was that the goverment of India could not be efficiently carried on by the British Parliament; that Indian appointments would become prizes to be won by jobbery; and that the direct rule of English public opinion would involve a disregard of native opinions and feelings. The Company, however, came to an end, and Mill refusing to accept a place on the new Councils, retired in 1858 on a pension of £1,500 a year.

VI.

Released from his official labors, Mill expected, he tells us, to settle down "for the remainder of his existence into a purely literary life." From the end of 1858 to the summer of 1865 he carried out this design, and wrote much both on political and philosophical topics. He published the essay on "Liberty," in which, after his wife's death, he resolved to make no further alteration. He put together a short treatise on "Utilitarianism" and reviewed in the *Edinburgh* the recently published lectures of his old friend, John Austin. His most elaborate performance, however, was his examination of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy. It involved him in some sharp controversies, and contained his final and most elaborate protest against the Intuitionist school. This, with the three posthumous essays—those on "Nature," on "The Utility of Religion" and on "Theism"—exhibits Mill's position upon the general philosophical questions which were not treated in the "Logic." In his earlier books he had been systematically reticent to a degree of which he afterward disapproved. When, in 1865, his political opponents tried to turn his unpopular opinions to account, the only phrase upon which they could fix was the sentiment expressed in the examination of Hamilton, that he would go to hell rather than worship an unjust God. He had intended, it seems, to publish the essay upon "Nature" himself, but the others were still to be held back. The three posthumous books, as we have said, give a sufficient account of Mill's real views touching religion.

Meanwhile he had been drawn to politics. A new Reform bill was becoming the object of practical political agitation. The surviving Utilitarians, indeed, had declined from the true faith. John Austin before his death had become distinctly Conservative. Mill himself had changed in some respects. Nevertheless, Radicalism in various forms was raising its head, and was willing to accept Mill, now a writer of the first celebrity, as its authorized interpreter. At this period he wrote much which shows his relation to the new party. He now objected to the ballot, the favorite nostrum of the philosophical Radicals, to which Grote still adhered. In 1861 he expounded his whole political doctrine in his "Considerations on Parliamentary Government," and he wrote for future publication his "Subjection of Women." In this, he intimates, "all that is most striking and profound belongs to his wife;" it appears that his stepdaughter also had some share in the composition. The outbreak of the Civil War in America led him to pronounce himself strongly in support of Bright, Goldwin Smith and other sympathizers with the cause of the Union. His opinions on this subject, although opposed to those commonly held among the English upper classes, fell in with those of the Radicals, and made him at once a representative of a strong current of opinion.

At the general election of 1865 Mill was invited to stand for Westminster. He accepted the invitation, though upon terms which showed that he would make no sacrifice of his principles. He refused to incur any expense. He would not canvass, although he attended a few public meetings in the week preceding the nomination. He declared that he would answer no questions about his religious beliefs, but upon all other topics would reply frankly. "Did you," he was asked at one meeting, "declare that the English working classes, though differing from those of some other countries in being ashamed of lying, were yet generally liars?" His answer, "I did," produced, he says, "vehement applause." Upon some points of the Radical creed Mill's opinions were not acceptable. His condemnation of the ballot and his adherence to woman suffrage and to minority representation marked his opposition to some Democratic tendencies, but these questions were not enough in the foreground at the time to render his views disqualifying. His election by a considerable majority roused great interest. The accepted leaders, such as Bright and Gladstone, welcomed him cordially to the House of Commons, and the young men who were then entering public life looked up to him with reverence. It was asserted by competent witnesses that the tone of the debates was perceptibly raised by his speeches. His old practice at debating societies and at the Political Economy Club had qualified him to give full expression to his thoughts. He poured out continuous and well-arranged essays, lucid, full of thought and frequently touching the point epigrammatically.

Mill helped to pass the Reform Bill of 1867, acted as a mediator between the Ministers and the Radicals who were responsible for the meeting in Hyde Park, and he made a weighty protest on behalf of a generous and thorough-going Irish policy. He thought that a separation of Ireland from Great Britain would be mischievous to both parties; but he advocated a scheme for giving a permanent tenure to existing tenants, with a due regard to vested interests. In Mr. Stephen's opinion, however, Mill did not obtain in Parliament that kind of personal weight which is sometimes acquired by a man who, though he may preach offensive doctrines, is obviously made of the same flesh and blood as his adversaries. He never could see anything in the class of country gentlemen except the embodiment of selfish stupidity, generated by class prejudice, and they, on their part, came to look upon him as a dangerous man. In the end, Mill made himself unpopular with a class wider than that which constituted the "stupid party." He took a very active part in the agitation provoked by Gov. Eyre's action in the Jamaica insurrection. Mill and the investigating committee, which he had demanded, impressed many people as allowing their indignation to swamp their sense of fair play. In many eyes, Gov. Eyre seemed a victim of persecution instead of a criminal. After the dissolution of Parliament, Mill incurred further odium by subscribing to Bradlaugh's election expenses. His own seat for Westminster was lost in 1868, and refusing some other offers, he retired once more to private life. His strength was apparently failing, and he achieved little more. His task was practically accomplished. He died at Avignon on the 8th of May, 1873, of a sudden attack, having three days before walked fifteen miles on a botanical excursion.

VII.

Mr. Stephen points out that those who know John Stuart Mill only by his writings have often misconceived the character of the man. Mill himself admits that the description of a Benthamite as "a mere reasoning machine" was true of himself during "two or three years," before he had learned to appreciate the value of the emotions. Many readers thought it true of him to the last. It cannot be said that his "Autobiography" is an attractive, though it is an interesting book. If the pages about his wife be omitted, there is a singular absence of the qualities which lend a charm to many autobiographies; there is no tender dwelling on early days and associations; his father is incidentally revealed as an object of profound respect, but the son has no illusions as to his sire's harsher qualities; hardly any reference is made to the writer's mother, or his brothers and sisters; his friends are briefly noticed, and their intellectual merits are set forth, but there is no warm expression of personal feeling for any of them. Mill's comments on his countrymen in general are contemptuous, and, though he is desirous of the welfare of the human species, he is as fully convinced as was Carlyle that men are "mostly fools." Old institutions awake no thrill; they are simply embodiments of prejudice; the British nation is divided between those who have a "sinister interest" in abuses, and the masses who are still too brutalized to be trusted. His "zeal for the good of mankind" was really to the last, what he had meant it to have been at the early period, a "zeal for speculative opinions." From such remarks some people have inferred that Mill was really a frigid thinker, a worthy expounder of the "dismal science," which leaves out of account all that is deepest and most truly valuable in human nature.

While he acknowledges that there is some truth in this estimate, the author of the book before us considers it on the whole unjust. As a matter of fact, Mill was a man of great emotional sensibility and of very unusual tenderness. Besides his great attachment to the lady who became his wife, he was deeply devoted to a few friends, and in certain cases greatly overrated their qualities. It is Mr. Stephen's belief that his feelings were as tender as a woman's. If they lacked anything, it was not keenness, but the massiveness which implies more masculine fibre. With respect to character, indeed, Mill was as much feminine as masculine. He had some of the amiable weaknesses which are regarded as especially feminine. He was remarkable for his powers of assimilation; he was docile rather than original. Like a woman he took things with excessive seriousness, and shows the want of humor imputed to most women. Prejudices provoked him; he could not see the comic side of prejudice or of life in general. On the other hand, he possessed in the highest degree the power of single-minded devotion which is preëminently a feminine quality. From his youth upward, he was devoted to the spread of principles which he held to be essential to human happiness. No philanthropist or religious teacher could labor more energetically and unremittingly for the good of his kind; he never forgot the bearing of his speculations upon this ultimate end.

VIII.

Some thirty pages of Mr. Stephen's third volume are allotted to Henry Thomas Buckle, who, some fifteen years younger than John Stuart Mill, was to become one of his conspicuous disciples. He was born at Lee in Kent, on the 24th of November, 1821. His father was a London merchant, a Tory and a stanch Churchman. The boy was sickly and spent only a very short time at an academy in Kentish Town; no other school and no university can claim credit for his education, which was liberal and comprehensive in a remarkable degree. By 1850 he had mastered eighteen foreign languages and had amassed a library of 22,000 volumes, chosen to provide him with the materials for a general history of civilization. Becoming gradually alive to the vastness of the task proposed, he narrowed his aim to the production of a history of civilization in England, with preliminary surveys of other civilizations. Mr. Stephen points out that Buckle had been reared in the religious and political atmosphere of the average middle class household, but foreign travel and wide reading had sapped his prejudices, and he had become a Liberal in the days when John Stuart Mill's influence was culminating. He shared the enthusiasm of the period in which the triumph of free trade and the application of Adam Smith's principles seemed to be introducing a new era of peace and prosperity, and promising the final extinction of antiquated prejudice. He cannot be reckoned as a Utilitarian pure and simple, but he represents the exoteric and independent allies of the chief Utilitarian thinker. The most characteristic tenets of the Mill school of speculation are assumed or defended in his writings. Buckle was thus fitted to interpret the dominant tendencies of the day, and Mr. Stephen, who criticized him severely in 1880, now recognizes that his literary ability was fully adequate to the office. He has, Mr. Stephen admits, much of the clearness and vivacity of Macaulay, and, whatever defects may be discoverable in his style, no writer was better qualified to interest readers outside the narrow circle of professed philosophers.

Buckle's fundamental principle is familiar, to-wit: that the progress of civilization is due, not to moral, but to mental, advancement. In other words, the essential difference between two stages of history is the difference between the quantity of knowledge possessed and diffused throughout all classes. Were this the whole truth, it would follow that we might write the history of mankind by writing the history of science. Comte had previously suggested that history might be written without mentioning the names of individuals. On Buckle's assumption, historians might deal simply with the growth of scientific ideas; they should not need to take into account the moral ideas, or all the complex system of [illegible] which come under the head of the will and the emotions in psychological treatises. It is quite unnecessary to remind the reader that Buckle's conception of history has been definitely rejected. He himself rejected it, when he turned from the general principle to practical applications of it. After insisting upon the utter inadequacy of the old historical and metaphysical methods, he proceeded to exemplify the very method of writing history which he had condemned. He did not inaugurate a better method of writing history than had been followed by Hallam and Macaulay, but it is acknowledged, even by some of his critics, that had he simply written a history of England, he might have eclipsed the [illegible] just named in their own line.

The first volume of Buckle's "History of Civilization in England" appeared in 1857; the second, in 1861. Meanwhile his health had been shattered, and on May 29, 1862, after six months wandering in Egypt and Palestine, he died of typhoid fever at Damascus. For more than [illegible] years he had been accounted one of the most skilful chess players in the world.

M. W. H.